

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 11897 031458Z

71

ACTION OES-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 FS-01 ABF-01 AGR-05 CIAE-00

COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01 HEW-04 HUD-01

INR-07 INT-05 LOC-01 NASA-01 NSAE-00 NSF-01 OMB-01

USIA-06 SMI-01 TRSE-00 L-03 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 EUR-12

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TAGS: PFOR, OSCI, TPHY, EG, US

SUBJECT: FURTHER PUBLICITY FOR PROJECT GRANT FG-EG-132

DEPARTMENT PASS USDA

ROME FOR ARS/GORDON

REF: CAIRO 11236

1. ON AUGUST 19, AL AKHBAR FORMER MINISTER BADRAN REPLIED TO CHARGES DESCRIBED REFTTEL THAT HE HAS MISUSED HIS POSITION IN MINAGR IN CONNECTION WITH SUBJECT GRANT. BADRAN SAID NEGOTIATIONS FOR GRANT HAD BEGUN IN 1971 WHEN HE WAS PROFESSOR AND CHIEF OF TIMBER DEPARTMENT AT ALEXANDRIA UNIVERSITY. ACCOUNT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED IN HIS NAME AS PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR AND CHECKS WERE TO BE CASHED ONLY WITH HIS SIGNATURE FOR LEGITIMATE EXPENSES FOR THE PROJECT. HE RETAINED THE FINAL APPROVAL FOR THE EXPENDITURES. HE DID NOT RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR HIS ROLE AS PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR DURING HIS TENURE AS

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PAGE 02 CAIRO 11897 031458Z

MINISTER, EVEN THOUGH HE PERFORMED ALL THE DUTIES

REQUIRED OF HIM DURING THE TIME HE WAS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND LAND RECLAMATION. REFERENCE MADE IN ORIGINAL ARTICLE THAT HE HAD ORDERED CHECKS CASHED WITHOUT DEDUCTIONS, WERE TO HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURAL FOREIGN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT NOT TO DEDUCT USUAL 10 PERCENT ADMINISTRATIVE FEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT.

2. HAMMANSI REPLIED AUGUST 27 SAYING THAT FACTS STILL SUPPORT HIS ALLEGATIONS THAT BADRAN SHOULD NOT HAVE PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN THE PROJECT DURING THE TIME HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE EGYPTIAN CABINET. HAMMANSI WENT ON TO SAY THAT CURRENT MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE ABU AL-ATA HAD REPLIED TO HIS PREVIOUS ARTICLE INFORMING HIM THAT PL-480 GRANTS ARE MADE BOTH TO MINISTRIES AND UNIVERSITIES IN THE FIELD OF AGRICULTURE. WHEN PROJECTS ARE GRANTED DIRECTLY TO THE MINISTRY, THEN FUNDS ARE HELD BY CENTRAL BANK OF EGYPT AND DISBURSED ACCORDING TO GOE FINANCIAL REGULATIONS. WHEN PROJECTS ARE GRANTED TO UNIVERSITIES, HOWEVER, AS IN THE CASE OF BADRAN'S PROJECT, THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR DEALING DIRECTLY WITH THE FINANCES. THEREFORE THE MINISTRY ITSELF CANNOT BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR ANY PROBLEMS WITH BADRAN'S GRANT SINCE IT DID NOT ADMINISTER THE FUNDS. MINAGR ASSURED HAMMANSI, HOWEVER, THAT IN ORDER TO ELIMINATE ANY FUTURE PROBLEMS HE WAS TRANSMITTING A REVISION OF REGULATIONS TO THE PRIME MINISTER ASKING THAT IN ALL FUTURE GRANTS THE MINAGR HAVE COMPLETE SUPERVISION OVER THE ADMINISTRATION AS WELL AS SUBSTANCE OF THE RESEARCH. ON THE BASIS OF THIS HAMMANSI THEN WENT ON TO CHARGE BADRAN WITH LYING THAT HE HAD CLOSELY COORDINATED HIS FINANCIAL EXPENDITURES WITH THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. PRESUMABLY BADRAN WILL NOW HAVE TO REPLY TO HAMMANSI'S FURTHER CHARGE.

3. COMMENT. AS INTERESTED WASHINGTON AGENCIES ARE AWARE, IT IS MANY TIMES VERY DESIRABLE TO DEAL DIRECTLY WITH UNIVERSITIES AND NOT THROUGH GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY IN CARRYINGOUT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH PROJECTS. WE FEAR THAT HAMMANSI, FOR REASONS QUITE UNRELATED, HAS PLAYED INTO THE HANDS OF MINAGR FOREIGN RELATIONS DEPT. WHO WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO BE THE SOLE COORDINATOR OF ALL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH IN EGYPT. THE UNFORTUNATE AFTER-EFFECTS OF THIS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 CAIRO 11897 031458Z

DECISION, SHOULD THE PRIMIN ACCEPT ABU-AL ATA'S DECISION, IS THAT OTHER PERSONS OR ORGANIZATIONS WHO WOULD LIKE TO CENTRALIZE CONTROL OVER OUR SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMS WILL BE GIVEN BIG BOOST. WE WILL SIMPLY HAVE TO WAIT TO SEE THE FINAL EFFECT OF THESE VERY UNFORTUNATE ARTICLES BEFORE WE GAUGE HOW TO REACT TO THEM. INTERESTED AGENCIES ARE REQUESTED TO KEEP EMBASSY FULLY INFORMED OF THEIR FUTURE PROJECT NEGOTIATIONS AND ANY INDICATION THAT PRESSURE IS BEING EXERTED UPON THEM

TO CONFORM TO NEW PROCEDURES. MEANWHILE WOULD APPRECIATE
USDA'S REACTION TO SUCCEEDING EXCHANGES ON THIS SUBJECT.
IT MIGHT NOT BE A BAD IDEA TO THINK ABOUT AN EARLIER VISIT BY
CHESTER GORDON TO SEE JUST EXACTLY WHAT IS GOING ON.

4. SHOULD PRIME MINISTER ISSUE REVISED REGULATIONS
REQUESTED BY MINAGR, AMBASSADOR WOULD POINT OUT ITS
IMPLICATIONS TO PM. IN MEANTIME WE WILL WRITE LETTER TO
MINAGR PRESENTING FACTS APPARENTLY OVERLOOKED PARTICULARLY
THAT ALL PROJECT CORRESPONDENCE HAS BEEN THROUGH THE MINISTRY
DEPT. OF FOREIGN RELATIONS. WE VIEW AS UNFORTUNATE THE CHARGE
THAT MINISTRY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR BADRAN'S PROJECT.
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